

Valkyrie

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“Please, master witcher! I know that I´m already dead, but...I don´t want to die again!”

—Unknown ghost

Valkyries (not to be confused with the valkyrjas of Skelliger Religion), also known as **specters of conflict**, are a type of demon, wraith, or [specter](#) of their own category (depending on the specific type of valkyrie) that in a lot of cases appears on battlefields in order to feed on the souls of the dying, finishing them off in the process or the recently dead. Luckily, most of them, have little to no interest in the living, so usually a [witcher](#) has no reason to hunt one down; in fact, they are often a blessing, since it keep her hunting grounds free of future dangerous wraiths.

In rare and quite ironic occasions, though, there have been reports of ghosts hiring a witcher to help them. In such events, a witcher should be aware that their problem is most likely a valkyrie, and that they are an extremely dangerous foe and thus, must be highly prepared in order to not face a certain death.

Contents

Valkyrie

Taxonomy

Classification

- Valkyrie (Greater Valkyries)
- Demon (Intermediate Valkyries)
- Wraith (Lesser Valkyries)

Physiology

Height

Usually to 2 meters when they are material

Wingspan

No one

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Weight

Weightless

Ecology**Lifespan**

Almost eternal

Intelligence

Human-like or beyond

Nature

Highly aggressive

RangeBattlefields around the **world****Habitat**

Chasm, appearing in the world through the gaps between Ley Lines that this para-elemental plane exploit, usually in areas of that gaps of the contaminated ether that gave them life

Diet

Souls

Prey**Ghosts****Predators****Witchers** (sort of)

Origin

Like other demons—which are ultimately a form of specters—A large portion of valkyries are formed through the accumulation of contaminated ether (in their particular case, ether associated with a specific type of violent death) within the Chasm that latter manifest between the gaps between Ley Lines that this plane of existence exploit in order to manifest in the world and allows entities from it—valkyries among them—to appear. In the case of the latter, usually in areas of that gaps of the contaminated ether that gave them life, that is, as mentioned earlier, mostly, battlefields.

Appearance

Valkyries, as such, do not possess a standard natural form. That is to say, they are not, for example, the dried corpses of men or women like noonwraiths, nightwraiths, voicelesses, beann'shies, wailwraiths, and many others when they appear in the world.

This is because their “*form*” is highly variable, depending on their type and on the fact that, ultimately, they are beings born from the pure agony of different kinds of death. Therefore, what could be called their “*standard natural form*” would be something akin to sonic specters, as they are made of a unique type of ectoplasm which, when interacting with the material world, tends to transform into pure sound.

This sound is constant and composed entirely of pain, being the closest thing to their already mentioned natural form. Each variation of this sound indicates the specific type of valkyrie it is.

Indeed, there have been many cases of witchers who died after confusing the sound of a valkyrie in this “*natural form*” with that of a beann'shie.

However, since sound alone cannot usually cause lethal damage in the material world unless it is extremely powerful—something that varies depending on the number of souls consumed by the valkyrie—many valkyries, especially those of mortal origin, possess another manifestation in addition to this “*form*” and the illusory one.

This is the “common form” they assume when materializing in order to kill a witcher or any other intruder in their territory. In the case of the mortal ones, this form typically appears as a two-meter-tall skeletal woman, dressed in a simple semi-transparent dress and a cloak which rises upward, giving the impression of wings.

However, it should be noted that although this is the most common appearance, it is far from uniform and presents numerous variations—just as in their “*true natural form*”—depending, once again, on the type of death from which the valkyrie originated.

Types

It is because of their feeding habits, and based on the names derived from

mistaken mythological interpretations of these beings, that over time valkyries have been assigned a series of types which reflect their most distinctive characteristics, and therefore the kinds of deaths that likely gave them their metaphysical origin through accumulation in the Abyss—and toward which they are most strongly drawn.

Some notable examples include: Geir (violent death by spear), Galdrar (violent death by spell), Grimgerde (violent death through extreme protection), Sveidr (violent death by sound), Thrud (violent death by empowerment), among many others. As a result, dealing with each type requires specific preparation rather than general preparation.

In addition to these types, it must be noted that if a woman suffers a particularly violent death on the battlefield, she may become a valkyrie after death, terrorizing the battlefield area for decades and forcing those in the surrounding region to kill each other in the same manner in which she died, so that she may feed on their souls. In fact, these valkyries—at least in the Northern Kingdoms (Skellige being another matter)—tend to be the most common.

Classification

Due to their nature, valkyries caused considerable headaches for scholars of supernatural phenomena for a long time, especially witchers. Eventually, fortunately, it was determined that they are neither strictly wraiths nor demons, but rather occupy a point between the two. As a result, they were given their own classification based on their name. This classification however can vary depending on the type of valkyrie one must deal with.

Thus, a valkyrie may be considered either its own category, a wraith (if of mortal origin), or a demon if it originated from a specific type of violent death as mentioned earlier.

Abilities

“Pathetic. If you believe you are going to torture me with this, then either you are arrogant, or you do not know that I already torture myself every day remembering it.”

—Gerring of Kharkiv, witcher of the School of the Viper, during the confrontation with the valkyrie that appeared on the outskirts of Ban Gleán, Kaedwen, during

the Third Northern War (1271–1272)

Like other specters, valkyries are capable of performing attacks such as dematerialization and illusory multiplication, with the unique addition of being able to read minds deeply and possessing far more advanced capabilities in illusory magic.

These abilities are primarily used against their victims on battlefields or when those victims are alone (in the case of Valkyries of mortal origin). They are capable of casting spells that even expert mages specializing in illusion could only dream of performing.

These spells are usually focused on making the specter's target believe that they have encountered a mysterious and beautiful winged woman (though this may vary depending on the individual and their beliefs) and that they have reached some kind of highly personalized paradise where they will live happily forever.

Once the specter's target lowers their guard, the illusion transforms—both literally and metaphorically—into the worst nightmare of the victim, devouring them after that instant (if it is a ghost), thereby increasing the valkyrie's power.

The only constant element in this behavior (beyond the general form of the illusion) is that within the nightmare the victim will “die” in the same manner of death to which the valkyrie is tied. This is followed by a second and true death when their soul is devoured.

In the case of valkyries of human origin, the process may be different: the victim will eventually die when they themselves become a specter, suffering two deaths in the manner of the valkyrie—the physical death and the false one as a specter—and finally a third death once their soul is consumed, merely delaying the inevitable process.

As for the level of these illusions, they are comparable to those produced by an *aguara*, meaning they are undetectable by a [witcher's medallion](#) and even by the enhanced and trained sight of witchers.

Behavior

“If they are not the apex predators of the spectral world, they come very close.”

—Byrnjolf, Grandmaster of the School of the Wolf before Vesemir.

Valkyries are solitary and highly territorial beings due to their intrinsic nature.

Although there have been cases of valkyries cooperating with one another, these are very rare, mainly among valkyries of mortal origin and usually tied to situations in which cooperation may increase the number of potential victims for both.

Group behavior is particularly common among sea valkyries and other similar subtypes, which, like any valkyrie, appear after a battle, though in the case of the sea valkyries it is a naval one.

It is important to highlight that although nearly all of them are driven by an eternal hunger for more souls in order to avoid being destroyed by other beings that inhabit the Chasm, at least in the case of valkyries of mortal origin, it is sometimes possible to reason with them and convince them to cease being valkyries and depart peacefully to the Afterlife.

Conditions of Appearance or Formation

Valkyries require a series of conditions in order to form or appear.

Formation

1. A violent death that is relatively common in a place marked by heavy bloodshed. However, the battlefield must be between two Ley Lines, allowing the Chasm to exploit the gaps and thus the valkyrie to appear as mentioned before.
2. In the case of those of mortal origin: the individual must be a woman.
3. The person must have been forgotten.
4. Related to point three to some extent (as proper burials may occur while point three still applies): the person must not have been buried properly.

Appearance

1. A violent death that is relatively common in a place marked by heavy bloodshed. The battlefield must be between two Ley Lines, allowing the Chasm to exploit the gaps and thus the valkyrie to appear as mentioned before as well.
2. The dying individual must have spent at least one hour alone before the valkyrie appears, without loved ones nearby or anyone able to provide even a distant but dignified farewell.

3. In the case of those of mortal origin: the first two factors apply, in addition to having been forgotten and a fourth factor.
4. The individual must have been forgotten and the place of their death must have moved on to other purposes rather than remaining a reminder that terrible things happened there. For example, a rebuilt village or city.

Categories

Like other specters, valkyries can be divided into three major groups, similar to the classification of demons, within which each subtype would be placed.

- Greater Valkyries: Those born from the general suffering of one or several battles. These are the ones that receive their own classification.
- Intermediate Valkyries: Those born from specific types of violent deaths. These are the ones classified as demons.
- Lesser Valkyries: Those of mortal origin. These are the ones classified as wraiths.

Range

Valkyries do not appear in just any battlefield or violent location. They only manifest in places that have been extremely bloody, and, more importantly, where there are dying individuals who have been forgotten by the rest and left there alone.

The only exception are valkyries formed from the previously mentioned individuals of mortal origin, which may continue to terrorize the area even after the place has changed.

History

First Records

Valkyries have existed in the world long before humans. They simply bore another name. Among the elves, in fact, they were known as Luned Mori Rígain (Elder Speech: *daughters of Mori Rígain*), the goddess of magic, war, and ghosts, later known to humans as [Morrigan](#). It was said that they served as her judges, tasked with judging those about to die in order to determine whether they were worthy

of ascending after death.

Reality, however, has proven to be darker and far simpler.

It is unknown whether during this period their illusory form was that of a winged woman. It is likely that it was not, although it may have been something similar, given Morrigan's association with ravens.

The Arrival of Humans to Skellige

It was not until the arrival of humans in Skellige that they received the name by which they would later be known. According to some scholars, the first inhabitants of the archipelago mistook them for a myth from which they had come that eventually evolved into the valkyrjas of the modern Skelliger Religion.

After the Arrival of Humans

It is almost certain that after the arrival of humans, due to their greater demographic presence, valkyries evolved—abandoning the illusory forms they had previously used when other races were the majority—and ultimately adopting the now common illusion of the beautiful winged woman.

The Northern Wars (1263-1272)

Due to the frequency of these conflicts, by the end of the Third Northern War, several battlefields of the North had become filled with them.

A particularly notable case was the failed attempt by Nilfgaard to take Skellige, during which the surrounding waters became filled with these specters—especially around the island of Undvik.

Rewards

Valkyries are among the most difficult spectral beings to deal with. The reward for slaying one usually starts at around 2000 in the different coins that exist and can go higher.

Weaknesses

Despite their power, like any other specter, valkyries are vulnerable to

dimeritium. Thus, it is always recommended to have dimeritium bombs or a sword made of this metal at hand.

In addition to that, like other specters and demons, they are vulnerable to specter oil and demon oil (depending on the type of valkyrie one is dealing with), they are unable to leave their territory, and they are affected by Signs such as Yrden.

Among their more unique weaknesses, we find that they can be “*frightened*”—in the most alien sense of the term—if, during the nightmare illusion phase, one displays courage or compassion. This leaves them unsure of how to respond and allows them to be materialized and eventually dispersed if the proper means are used.

When they materialize, unlike most other specters, they take longer to dematerialize. This is due to their previously mentioned “*natural form*,” they also are able to adapt to the combat style of whoever confronts them. While this may be a great advantage for them against their opponent, it can also become a disadvantage if the opponent knows how to exploit it.

Another limitation is that they cannot extract the soul of a living person. Instead, they can only temporarily increase that person’s vulnerabilities so that death arrives sooner.

Finally, they possess a series of weaknesses analogous to the type of death from which they originated. For example: A valkyrie born from death by a blow to the head will be more susceptible to strong strikes to the head when materialized while a valkyrie born from death by sound will be more vulnerable to sonic attacks even if it has converted into their sound form, allowing their opponent capture them if necessary or dispersed with a louder sound, also one born from death by spell will be more vulnerable to magic in general than most valkyries or average specters, and so on.

Slaying

“Sweet as an apple, yet as deadly as the embrace of a Valkyrie.”

—Popular saying from the island of Faroe, Skellig archipelago

The first thing a witcher must do when facing a valkyrie is consider whether the fight is worth the risk and understand that it will likely be a very long battle.

The second step is to make sure that the specer truly is a valkyrie, and determine

which type it is. Only after this identification should the witcher begin preparing, taking into account both its nature and type, as the chances of success—or death—vary greatly depending on this.

In general, four things should always be included in the witcher's arsenal: dimeritium bombs, specter oil or demon oil applied to the sword (depending on which class of valkyrie would be faced), the Yrden Sign, to reduce the Valkyrie's speed in combat and force it to materialize and lastly, elixirs such as Plyclust, since this elixir allows the ears to automatically block and unblock depending on whether the valkyrie transforms into sound. This prevents the constant agonizing scream that constitutes its "*natural form*" from drilling into the witcher's ears and causing distraction. It also heightens the witcher's sixth sense to such a degree that, even if temporarily deafened, the witcher can still perceive precisely where the valkyrie is while in its sonic form.

If only small quantities of Plyclust are available, it is recommended to know the echolocation variant of the Sign Supirre, created by the blind witcher Warrit of the [School of the Viper](#), which allows the valkyrie's sonic form to be given a detectable shape. Signs such as Aethric, which reveal the magical echo of ghosts, are ineffective against valkyries due to their sonic nature.

Consuming [Petri's Philter](#) is also recommended in order to increase the strength and duration of Signs, particularly if the aforementioned variant of Supirre will be used.

After preparing, the witcher must follow the sound of the valkyrie in its sonic form, which can usually be heard across at least one square kilometer (depending on the valkyrie's strength). The witcher should then proceed to the battlefield or the specific site tied to the valkyrie (in the case of one of mortal origin), prepare their sword with the appropriate oil, ready the bombs, and use the terrain to their advantage.

Under no circumstances should the witcher rely on a fixed combat style, as the valkyrie will adapt to it, making the fight significantly more difficult.

After a battle that may last several hours, the valkyrie will eventually vanish if it has been forced to materialize and wounded several times. Such a fight can leave the witcher extremely exhausted, not only due to the length of the combat but also because of the valkyrie's ability to amplify the weaknesses of its opponent. For this reason—at least in the case of valkyries of mortal origin—it is often better to negotiate with them and help them pass on, rather than attempt

to destroy them.

Loot

There is no reward beyond the payment already agreed upon with the contractor, the achievement of having defeated one, and, on rare occasions, the materialized remains left behind by the valkyrie. Among these remains one may sometimes find a valkyrie mutagen, which can be used to brew the valkyrie decoction.

This decoction is useful for passing through areas filled with wraiths without having to destroy them, as it alters the witcher's aura in such a way that it inspires terror in these specters, causing them to flee instead of attacking upon sight. However, as a side effect, it causes constipation for several days, and kidney stones if consumed excessively over the long term.

Notable Valkyries

- Luned Mori Rígain
- Skelliger Sea Valkyries
- Valkyrie of Ban Gleán

Image Credits

- *Valkyrie Sketch* by Witcher190

Trivia

- A lot of the monster information is based on the sneak peek of the canceled Homebrew Bestiary for the Far North created by [u/LordMarcusrax](#) for subreddit of The Witcher TTRPG.
- The “*natural form*” made of sound is inspired by the various Norse battle cries recorded in several sagas, known as *hérop*, designed to induce fear, encourage camaraderie, and invoke the gods.
- It is also inspired by the concept of the classic “*invisible*” specter in popular culture, the poltergeist.



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